

The Empire of the Dutch Republic/ Netherlands/Holland Factors to Consider

Student Name _____ Date _____

- 1) In the mid-16th century, the Netherlands were part of the Spanish Empire. The Dutch successfully revolted against Spanish taxes—levied to fund Spanish wars—and strict Catholic orthodoxy, and by the early 17th century were effectively independent from Spain.
- 2) The Netherlands had the least autocratic government in Europe and were governed as a republic.
- 3) The Netherlands, a largely Protestant nation, was also religiously tolerant and its main port city of Amsterdam was home to Christian dissenters and Jews who played a key role in Dutch prosperity.
- 4) Holland's factories and workshops produced goods of exceptional quality at a moderate price and on a vast scale including fine textiles. They also refined West Indian sugar, brewed beer from Baltic grain, and made imitations of Chinese ceramics.
- 5) During the 17th century, Dutch ships dominated the sea trade of Europe and conducted nearly half of all the oceangoing commercial shipping in the world. Its priority was to keep channels of trade open.
- 6) The Dutch East India Company was given a legal monopoly over all Dutch trade in the Indian Ocean.
- 7) The Dutch seized the key chokepoint of Malacca from the Portuguese in 1641 and sought, like the Portuguese before them, to monopolize the spice-producing islands of Southeast Asia. They used the indigenous slave labor force to grow key spice crops, particularly nutmeg and cloves.
- 8) By the mid-17th century, the Dutch faced growing mercantile and naval competition from the English who expanded their navy and overseas trade dramatically.